

Appl. No. 10/017,894
Response Dated September 21, 2004
Reply to Office Communication dated September 7, 2004

AMENDMENTS

In The Specification:

In the first paragraph after the title on page 1, lines 2 through 4, please amend the paragraph as follows:

The present application claims ~~priority to the~~ benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/272,548 filed on March 1, 2001 and entitled "A Pre-Fastened Absorbent Article Having Improved Fit and Fastening Features".

In the original Summary of the Invention section, please delete the original Summary beginning on page 4, line 24, and ending on page 9, line 36, and replace with the following rewritten Summary:

In response to the difficulties and problems discussed above, new prefastened, pant-like disposable absorbent articles that have simplified and improved primary fasteners for forming the prefastened absorbent articles have been invented. As previously described, a common fastening feature for absorbent articles is to provide a hook component and a corresponding loop component for securing the back waist region to the front waist region of the absorbent article. The present invention is directed in part to multiple property fasteners. The multiple property fasteners of the invention provide multiple features such as reliable engagement and skin friendliness (or reduced abrasiveness) in a single fastener.

The present invention is directed to a pant-like, prefastened, disposable absorbent article. The article includes an absorbent, a front waist region, a back waist region and a crotch region that extends between and connects the waist regions. In addition the article includes a longitudinal direction, a lateral direction, an exterior surface and an interior surface opposite the exterior surface. The article also includes a pair of laterally opposed side edges and a pair of longitudinally opposed waist edges. Further the absorbent article includes a multiple property fastener. The multiple property fastener defines a fastener longitudinal direction, a

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fastener lateral direction and a fastener area. The multiple property fastener further includes at least one engagement zone of a first mechanical fastening material and at least one non-abrasive zone of a second mechanical fastening material. Additionally, the multiple property fastener is oversized to provide stability between the front waist region and the back waist region and to maintain the pant-like, prefasted configuration.

In another aspect of the present invention, the article may include one engagement zone covering one half of the fastener area in the fastener longitudinal direction and one non-abrasive zone covering the other half of the fastener area in the fastener longitudinal direction.

In another aspect of the present invention, the first mechanical fastening material is made from a polypropylene copolymer. Alternatively the second mechanical fastening material is made from a polymer selected from elastomeric thermoplastic polymers and metallocene catalyzed polymers.

In another aspect of the present invention the multiple property fastener is engageable into the front waist region of the article. Alternatively the multiple property fastener is engageable into the back waist region of the article.

In yet another aspect of the present invention the multiple property fastener has a top edge that is generally aligned with one of the waist edges of the article.

It is to be understood that both the foregoing general description and the following detailed description are exemplary and are intended to provide further explanation of the invention claimed. The accompanying drawings, that are incorporated in and constitute part of this specification, are included to illustrate and provide a further understanding of the articles and methods of the invention. Together with the description, the drawings serve to explain various aspects of the invention.

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In the Brief Description of the Drawings on page 10, lines 13 through 21, please amend as follows:

Fig. 3 representatively shows a plan view of the prefastened absorbent article of Fig. 1 in an unfastened, stretched and laid flat condition with the surface of the article which contacts the wearer's skin facing the viewer ~~and with portions of the article partially cut away to show the underlying features;~~

Fig. 4A-4I representatively shows front plan views of various examples of multiple property fasteners that can be used with the prefastened absorbent articles of the invention. The multiple property fasteners can have zones of different hook materials. The multiple property fasteners can also have zones of engagement hooks and non-abrasive hooks in different configurations as depicted in the Figure;

On page 10, lines 33 through 35, please amend as follows:

Fig. 8 representatively shows a partial plan view of a prefastened absorbent article of the invention in a flat position in order to illustrate the relationship between the multiple property fasteners of the invention and the front waist region of the article.

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On page 32, line 17 through 32, please amend as follows:

The experiments summarized in Table 1 above demonstrate the dimension of the oversized multiple property fasteners 60 in the fastener lateral direction 63. The dimension of the oversized multiple property fasteners 60 in the fastener longitudinal direction 62 is also relevant. If the oversized multiple property fastener 60 does not have sufficient length in the fastener longitudinal direction 62, the waist edge 32 of the article will roll/fold inward. Desirably, the oversized multiple property fastener 60 has a length in the fastener longitudinal direction 62 sufficient to bring the edge of the fastener within about 1 inch (2.54 cm) of the waist edge 32 of the article. The distance between the oversized multiple property fastener 60 and the waist edge 32 is indicated in Fig. 8 by reference numeral '79'. Generally speaking then, the oversized multiple property fastener 60 has a top edge that is generally aligned with a waist edge 32 of the article. Generally speaking then, the oversized multiple property fastener 60 has a top edge that is generally aligned with a waist edge 32 of the article. While waist edge 32 folding was not measured for the articles identified in Table 1., for each of the tested articles the fastener was within about 1 inch of the waist edge. Therefore, it is possible to locate fasteners on conventional diapers within about 1 inch of the waist edge. The maximum length of a fastener in the fastener longitudinal direction 62 will depend on the overall size of the article; desirably, however, the fastener is not so long in the fastener longitudinal direction 62 that the fastener occludes or covers up the leg opening of the article.